

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 20 are pending in the application and stand rejected as anticipated by or obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,629,181 issued to Alappat. Applicants have amended Claims 1, 8 and 15 and have canceled Claim 13. Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and request withdrawal by the Examiner of the rejections.

Alappat discloses fixed bus structures for test instruments to connect cards or modules without high software overhead or specialized chip sets.

Claim 1 as amended recites, in part, "a protective housing coupled to the printed circuit board proximate to and separate from the board signal connector and the cable connector".

Claim 8 as amended recites, in part, "the signal connector separate from the housing connector" and "the mating connector separate from the protective housing".

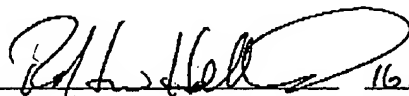
Claim 15 as amended recites, in part, "a housing separate from the Serial ATA connector and having openings on opposing sides, the openings sized to accept the Serial ATA connector from one side and a separate Serial ATA mated cable connector from the opposing side".

Alappat cannot anticipate or make obvious Claims 1, 8 and 15 because Alappat fails to teach, disclose or suggest all elements recited by Claims 1, 8 and 15. For instance, Alappat fails to teach, disclose or suggest a housing separate from signal and cable connectors. Alappat fails to address the coupling of cable connectors to a circuit board since Alappat focuses on connection directly to electrical bus lines. The direct connection avoids the "software overhead" associated with cable connectors, such as USB connectors. Therefore, Alappat teaches away from the claimed invention which recites a signal connector mounted to the circuit board. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Alappat cannot anticipate or make obvious Claims 1, 8 or 15, and request withdrawal of the rejections to Claims 1-12 and 14-20.


CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 502264.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent to the USPTO via Facsimile on this the 16 th day of August 2004.	
 Attorney for Applicant(s)	<u>16 Aug 2004</u> Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,


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